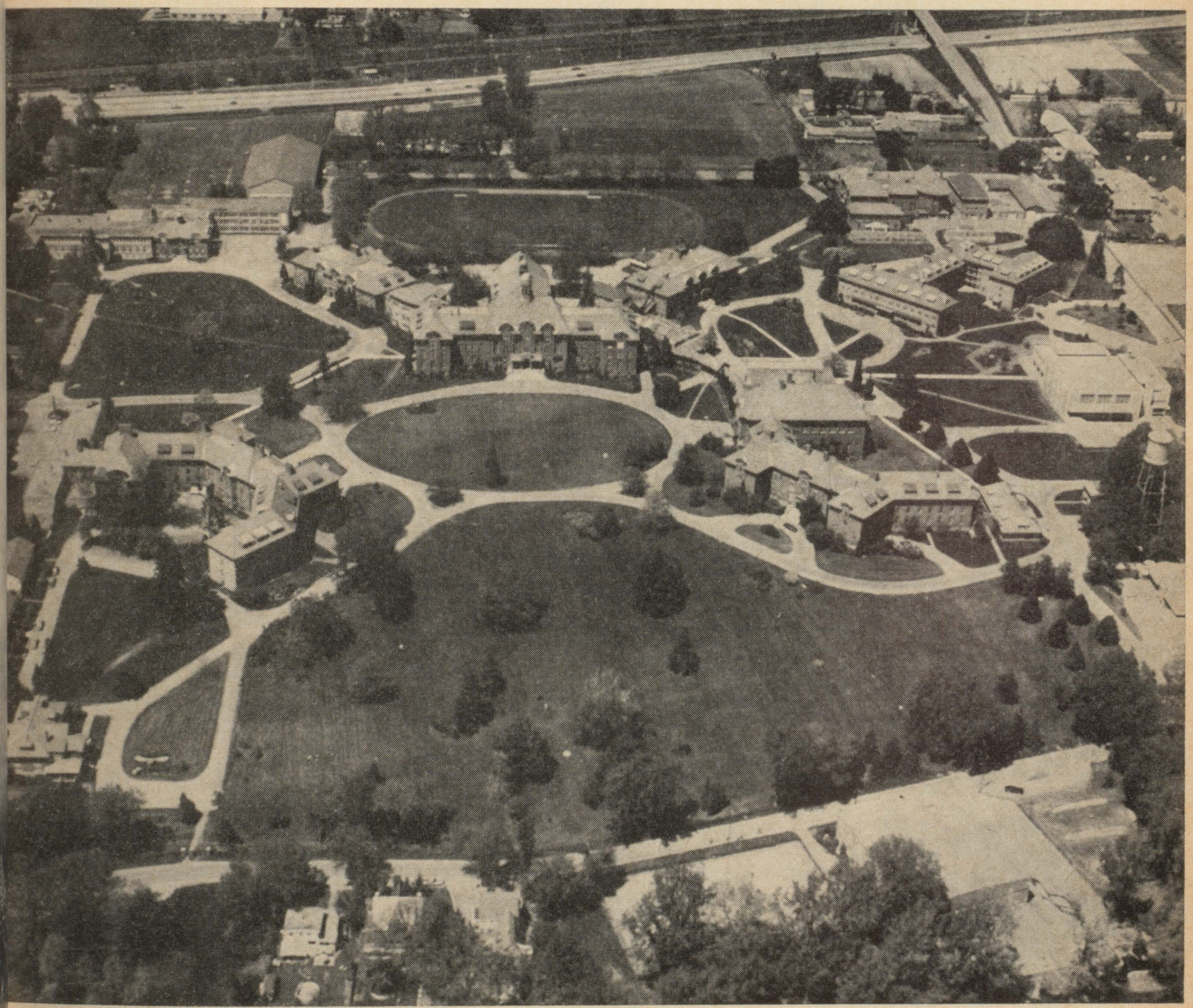
The macdonald journal

MAY 1975



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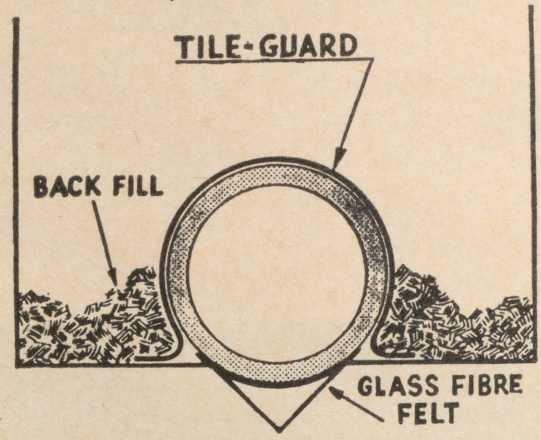

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THE macdonald JOURNAL

MAY 1975

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Volume 36, No. 5
May 1975

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In This Issue

Journal Jottings

Many of us don't like change. The familiar, the proven, the slightly worn and comfortable — these seem so much easier to live with. But change is all around us and it is not necessarily a cop out to say that we should at least try to adapt to it, even if we find it difficult to accept. Time alone is often the only judge of whether change has been beneficial or not.

Our cover this month depicts what has been known since 1905 as the central core of Macdonald College. This 200-acre area of manicured campus and distinctive buildings has been the hub of the wheel whose spokes stretch out over 1,600 acres that make up the entire College. Plans are that part of this area will be leased by McGill University to John Abbott College, an English-language CEGEP which has shared this Campus for several years. As a result, the hub of Macdonald will shift. While the hub gets its new bearings the wheel may be temporarily out of alignment but the spokes of teaching, research, and extension will continue to keep turning out graduates, research results, and services to the community. These things will not change. Dr. Blackwood, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Vice Principal of Macdonald College tells us about these recent developments beginning on page 3.

Prior to this decision, a great deal of discussion centred on buildings, teaching, and students. I find it of interest, therefore, to have in the same issue an article on regional schools. The subject is one I have longed to see discussed, but I was afraid I would get either all pros or all cons for there seem to be few who can be objective on this subject.

The author of the article in this issue can be objective; he can weigh the pros and cons; he can question with reason and answer with logic. Vernon Pope wrote the article I wanted, and I know many of our readers, who have children in regional schools, will read it with interest. We, at Macdonald College, who may soon be undergoing a period of change, might also benefit from his comments. I know that in the past I have, for he was not only my first employer and the Editor but also "my teacher" for 10 years.

Hazel M. Clarke

Editorial

At the end of May Macdonald College will lose the services of a friend who has given many years of dedicated effort to the Macdonald Journal and the Extension Department. Walker Riley, assistant professor in the Agronomy Department and Associate Director of the Diploma in Agriculture course, will accept a position of extension crops and specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food at North Bay, Ontario. We at the College will all miss Walker very much. But perhaps it will be the readers of the Journal and rural groups, who have "hosted" Walker as a guest speaker, who will miss him the most. His column "Country Notebook", which appeared regularly in many Quebec rural newspapers, is an example of the type of Walker's efforts that will be Quebec's loss and Ontario's gain. However, I know that all of us and you wish him every success in his new role.

I had asked Walker to write this editorial. He was willing as always, but all the details of tying up loose ends have prevented him from doing this. So in an attempt to fill in for him I would like to leave you with one of Walker's ideas that he mentioned he would like to see happen in Quebec. This is the idea of each farm having its own experimental farm. This could be in the form of setting aside one or two acres on which one could seed different corn, oat, or grass varieties or perhaps try different fertilizer applications or different methods of seedbed preparation and cultivation or different types or rates of herbicides. The same idea could be applied in a limited way to beef, dairy, and pork. One may be interested in setting aside a few animals to compare creep feeding versus milk feeding, high roughage versus high concentrate rations, confined versus open housing, etc.

The ideas and possibilities are really endless if you think about it for a while. But the important thing is not what form or size such experiments take. Rather the idea is the idea or concept behind the trials in that the farmer is regularly trying new ideas and management schemes on a limited or trial basis which are relevant and applicable to his own farm and which could be easily incorporated into his existing farm enterprise or management systems.

Of course we already have many existing federal and provincial agricultural research stations which do carry on a great deal of valuable research. In fact, most of the technical advances in agriculture have originated at these stations. But the research being carried out at these places is often very preliminary or exploritory or is otherwise not directly applicable to a particular farm operation. Or perhaps the station is not always easily accessible or open for unannounced visits. These are reasons why the idea of an experimental farm within a farm has such interesting possibilities. Of course it would require some additional effort, time, money, and technical information. But perhaps this might be a role that a rural farm organization might develop a program of assistance around. It is an educational role that could provide some interesting and relevant information at local meetings.

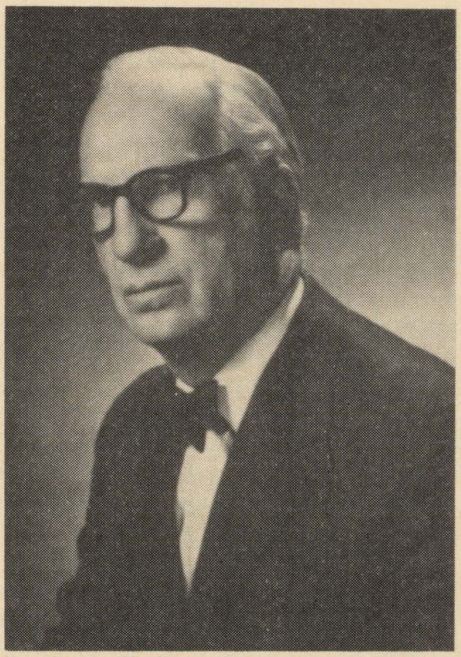
Gordon Bachman

Macdonald in the Future

(Dr. A. C. Blackwood, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Vice Principal of Macdonald College, discusses recent developments at the College with Hazel Clarke of the Macdonald Journal.)

Hazel Clarke: Dr. Blackwood, there have been many proposals in the last few years regarding the future of the Faculty. Could you outline them for us, briefly?

Dr. Blackwood: In 1970 when the University went into financial difficulties, they suggested that the Faculty should move to the downtown Campus as had the Faculty of Education two years previously. This suggestion was made mainly for financial reasons and was not considered in the first place on academic grounds. Since then there have been a number of other suggestions made, particularly one by the government committee called Operation Sciences Appliquées which suggested that the teaching of undergraduate students in agriculture at McGill was perhaps redundant and that all the teaching in the province should go on at Laval. This proposal was successfully opposed by the University and the strong presentation made by the Principal and others to the committee convinced them that closing the Faculty here would be a very retrograde step. More recently it has been suggested (the Kingdon Report) that the Faculty should share the Campus here with John Abbott College in a way



Dr. A. C. Blackwood.

that would allow the Faculty to have an opportunity to develop the way it wishes and also allow a lower cost for operation of the Faculty on the Macdonald College Campus.

With the increasing importance of agriculture, the number of students that are interested in following this discipline has been increasing, and we feel that the Faculty will have a growth period in spite of the fact that there will be fewer students coming to universities as a whole in Quebec in the next few years. And all evidence thus far points to this in that we have had between 10 and 15 per cent growth in each year of the last two years, and it looks at least this high for the coming year.

Hazel: Has a final decision been reached re the future of the Faculty of Agriculture and, if so, would you tell us what that decision is?

Dr. Blackwood: At a meeting held on Tuesday, April 15, at which were present a number of members of the McGill administration including the Principal Dr. Bell, and also Mr. Stewart and a number of his colleagues, Mr. Stewart made a statement to the Faculty that he would support the proposal to share the Campus with John Abbott. This hinges on John Abbott being able to get permission to sign the lease. The decision then is that we will gradually vacate some of our present space and move partially into a new building and partially into space that is renovated in some of the present buildings.

Hazel: What does this MAC-JAC split mean in physical terms: i.e., location, space, buildings, and so forth?

Dr. Blackwood: The proposal envisages that John Abbott will take over operation of the Main, Biology, and Chemistry Buildings and also the operation of the two older residences — Brittain Hall and Stewart Hall. It envisages that the Faculty will utilize the Agriculture Building, the Agricultural Engineering Building, a new building to be constructed, plus a residence in Laird Hall, and

the Centennial Centre. Facilities will be shared between the two groups both from a service point of view and from students' services and particularly athletics. The Faculty will retain control of Glenfinnan rink. We will have the opportunity to expand our athletic facilities as they are necessary.

Hazel: What are the first steps to be taken under this agreement?

Dr. Blackwood: The plan envisages moving over a period of three years. The first step will be the most difficult one of vacating the Main Building. The present occupants of the Main Building may have to move into temporary quarters. It is hoped that the construction of a new building will begin in October of 1975 and be finished ready for occupancy by August, 1976. This is a tight schedule and is dependent on no delays in building. If there are delays, the arrangement is made that it will be possible to make other time schedules from the point of view of both the Faculty of Agriculture and of John Abbott College. Renovating the Agriculture Building will take a period of three years, and it will be renovated in three steps with a minimum dislocation of the people who are there. It is hoped that, except for the people in the Main Building, nobody will move more than once.

Hazel: Will there be room for possible expansion in the new set-up? In other words, can you foresee the Faculty increasing in student numbers or course offerings?

Dr. Blackwood: I can foresee that the Faculty will increase in student numbers and also we will develop new course offerings. The Faculty at present is heavily loaded with teaching programs, and it will not be possible to expand into new course offerings unless new staff are hired. This is tied in with a late development in which the Diploma course is going to be taken over financially by the Department of Agriculture and should give us an opportunity to expand that program in a self-sufficient way.

The project, as outlined in the Kingdon Report, envisages expansion up to 920 full-time students. At the moment we have slightly under 600 students so it does allow about a 1/3 expansion.

Hazel: Will research be affected in any way by this move?

Dr. Blackwood: Yes, it certainly will. It is hoped that research, particularly interdisciplinary research, will be very positively affected by this in that the move will bring together groups that have common interests in research and it will be much easier for them to begin joint programs than it has been in the past. Also there will be a detrimental effect to some research during the move situation, but it is hoped to minimize this so that there will be no real break in research activities. Unfortunately, all moves take time and certainly some of the staff and students will be dislocated for short periods of time. I think also that the new plan envisages new programs in research, and there should be enough room for expansion to take care of this.

Hazel: Are you pleased, Dr. Blackwood, with the prospects for the future?

Dr. Blackwood: I believe that the prospects for the future are very good for the Faculty, and the main reason is that I think a decision has been made that looks as if it will give the Faculty stability for a long period of time. This is something the Faculty has needed. There will be unhappiness among some of the staff and students with changes that are taking place, but in the long run I believe that the Faculty has an excellent future from a teaching, research, and extension point of view, and so I look forward to growth of the Faculty in somewhat new surroundings. In short, I believe that now that the decision has been taken, there will be a period of stability within the Faculty that will greatly encourage the Faculty to do the kinds of things that they are well equipped to do and that they wish to do.

A View from Within

by V. A. Pope

(Before becoming a teacher, Vernon Pope spent close to 30 years in journalism. Many of our readers will remember him as Editor of the now-defunct Family Herald. He held that position from 1953 until 1964.)

Either the argument about big and little schools has gone off the boil in the last few years, or it has removed itself from my area of awareness. Whichever the case, I do not propose to turn up the burner; however, in the eight years since I left the world of journalism and took to teaching I have had eight years of experience in one of the regional schools that stoked the fires of controversy. Things look somewhat different on the inside, and vast changes have taken place in the world outside. It may be a good time to consider how it is all working out.

General opinion seems agreed — and I with it — that the purpose of our schools is not just to sharpen the intellect, but to develop a person. Intellectual development is not set aside, but is recognized as only one attribute of a human being, and not necessarily desirable for itself alone. It is an engine whose potential and power must be controlled and directed by its owner and, for the good of all of us, that owner had better be someone with horse sense, stability, and a heaping scoopful of the old-fashioned virtues. If our schools can turn out such people, we have a fair chance of improving the world. If this is our goal, we can perhaps distinguish whether the big regional schools may be expected to move us toward it, or away from it.

Whatever our opinions, they cannot be conclusive. The seed we cultivate for a short while in our schools was planted long before, and the harvest from it is hidden in future time. But many present causes have present effects, and such effects may be reasonably projected.

First, let us consider numbers. Here I confess to prejudice. I was raised on a farm, and even a single playmate was rare. At school I felt overwhelmed. In the school where I now teach the recess bell floods the corridors with students in a number three times greater than the entire population (at that time) of the town which embraced the school that I attended. I cannot believe that such mass concentrations of children are, of themselves, good for them, and I think scientific studies so indicate. On the other hand, they may have a useful potential. Ultimately these children must forsake protection and enter a world which is daily becoming more and more crowded. If these huge schools can be skilfully used to enable youngsters to cope with this kind of living, it would be a plus. So far, however, I do not think this possibility has been studied.

Economy was one of the arguments for regional schools. Where a small school by careful budgeting may save a little, a regional school puts all those little savings together and they become a lot — theoretically, at least. Perhaps it is working that way. Teachers are not privy to the school board's accounts, so I cannot say. In principle, I agree with wise economy; I do not agree with substituting the undesirable for the desirable in education in order to save a dollar. In the decision for big schools the saving of money should never have been more than a corollary — not a primary purpose. But that time is past, and savings are welcome.

Facilities and equipment are put forward as major gains obtained through regionalization. The evidence is impressive. Auditoriums, handsome and huge gymnasiums, audio-visual equipment, extensive libraries, all are there. In addition there are laboratories, superbly equipped shops for vocational training in wood, metals, automobile repair, electricity and electronics. There are large cafeterias, where a small school might have had to get by with a kettle of soup brought in at lunch time.

All these new, and sometimes expensive, features appear to fulfil their purposes, though whether they do so economically is another question. Shops must work with expensive raw materials, and a teacher issuing — or mending — outworn texts in other classes is likely to cherish private thoughts about relative values. Thoughts of a similar nature creep into the mind regarding audio-visual equipment. Sometimes it is the only answer to a difficult problem, but all these devices are delicate. With age, use, and the cost of good repairs, the machine you have been counting on may prove itself to be just one more problem with a difficult answer. Then the teacher has to fall back on chalk, blackboard, and a mind made nimble by desperation.

Comfort and quiet must seem like impossible luxuries to students who

seek them in a big school. Every year that I teach leads me more and more to the conclusion that it was a ghastly error not to funnel a part of the big school saving into some kind of room where students with time on their hands could just go and sit comfortably and chat. Obviously, such a facility would bring its problems. Lack of it means lunch periods in bad weather with students sitting on floors and stairs, with the rising noise forcing the pitch of conversation up and up.

Acoustics are thus another difficulty in big schools, and one which receives scant attention and expenditure except in such obvious places as libraries, music rooms, and auditoriums. Architects save money by doing things with concrete and brick. The handsome results reflect sound as a mirror reflects light. One of the most efficient noise-producers known is the average human between the ages of six and sixteen. Turn 1,300 of these loose in surroundings with bad acoustics, and you have a real hysteria factory.

Windowless rooms are another natural result of big-school architecture. Students and teachers alike abhor them, but it is not possible, one gathers, to avoid them in a design which must satisfy as many different requirements as a school demands. The best one can do for a claustrophobic student is to leave the door open.

Discomforts and inconveniences can be endured and ignored, of course, and in general they are; nevertheless, they have their effects on those who must cope with them. They do not bother me unduly, but I am left wondering whether the endurance of these irritations works toward shaping better citizens. It looks to me like a bone on which the psychologists of education coulld afford to do some chewing.

Changes from without and within are constantly jolting and joggling the educational machine nowadays. In the years following World War II, we accepted the idea that progress requires change. Now I get the feeling that we have inverted it to mean that change is progress. I am not likely to stem that tide single-handed, but perhaps I may point out that it is bad for youngsters. The school day is a long one for children. For many it begins with a long, long bus ride and ends the same way, and is crammed with effort and frustrations in between. To endure it, a child needs things around him to be stable: to provide him with an area of reliability from which he may launch himself into new things, and to which he may return with confidence and trust. If you doubt the importance of this, try teaching a class which has undergone several rapid substitutions of teachers, as may sometimes happen.

Every change in the educational system filters down at last, in some form or other, to the students. Whether the effect is good or bad, the change, itself, is disturbing. It is my observation that the main shock-absorbing factor for the students is usually the teacher. Whether we change from little schools to big schools, from old math to modern math, from Dickens to Hemingway, it is not going to do much harm if we have guessed wrong — just as long as there is a teacher in the classroom capable of smoothing out the humps and bumps with understanding and real concern. And the bigger the school the more vital this becomes.

Efforts are made in the regional schools (as they are, no doubt, in all large schools) to help students with their problems by providing a system of guidance counselling. I respect the work these people do, but their time is limited. If every student with a problem asked to see them, their appointment books would be filled in minutes. It is the teachers who take up the slack, patching damaged egos, renewing waning confidence, and comforting griefs.

My time as a teacher has been relatively short, so I should still be able to summon up some of the objectivity painfully developed in nearly 30 years of journalism. In any case, I believe I am being objective in saying that the past eight years have convinced me that, quite literally, nothing in education is as important as the teacher in the classroom.

The storms that arise over methods, plants, facilities, equipment, organization and all the rest are surface things. In the final analysis it is the teacher who shapes the student. Other factors have their effects, good and bad, but again it is the teacher who attempts to amplify the one and modify the other. Since I am a teacher myself such statements are open to accusations of bias, but I am not speaking of myself.

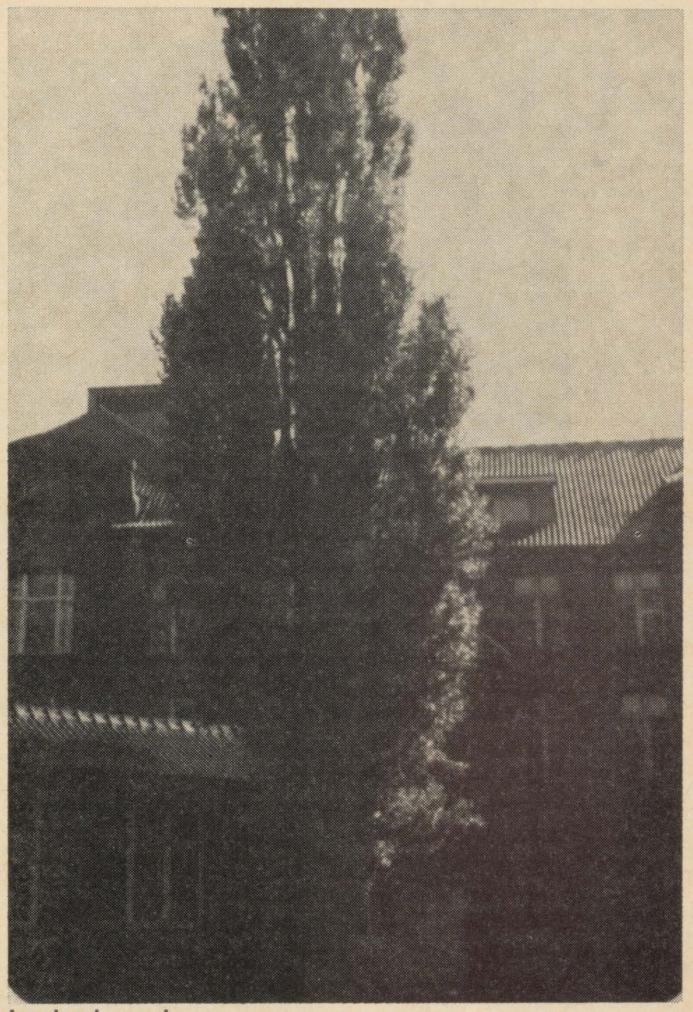
Among the teachers whom I see at work there are many who could teach in an open field, or a garage, or an igloo. And their students would learn, and love them, and be the better for it. If we want the best in education, let us pay attention to our teachers. Hire the very best, treat them with dignity and respect, and the children who spend those few, brief years in their classrooms will emerge therefrom ready and able to make the world a better place.

Plant Lice on Lettuce Roots

by F.O. Morrison and E. H. Alleyne, Department of Entomology

Did you have bad luck with your lettuce last summer? If many plants developed poorly, or died, or possibly grew heads that stayed soft and did not firm up, one of the causes may have been aphids sucking sap from the underground parts of the plants. Infested plants, when pulled up, appear to have a grey or blue-grey mould-like material adhering to the roots and discolouring the surrounding soil. Careful observation reveals the presence of large numbers, as many as 1,000 per plant, of tiny plant lice in the soil and on the roots. The granular, diffuse grey substance, is a mass of waxy threads and dust produced by the aphids. It covers the insects and neighbouring soil particles.

The lettuce root aphid enjoys two very different worlds during a single lifetime. Part of its life is spent sheltered in little growths produced especially for it by obliging Lombardy poplar trees; the other part is spent underground on the roots of lettuce and other plants.



Lombardy poplar.

Each little wingless aphid in the mass on a lettuce root has the capacity to produce an average of 27 living young over a period of a month. There are no males in these subterranean colonies. Each aphid is a potential mother. Can you imagine an investment that would yield 27 to one (2700 per cent) compounded every 30 days. Of course this is limited to the summer months. Winter is a holdover proposition. In August a number of the soil aphids change their ways and give birth to living female offspring which develop wings. These follow the roots of the plants up to the soil surface and fly off in search of a wintering place. They are programed to seek and utilize Lombardy poplar trees, those tall, slim, quick-growing trees dear to the heart of the landscape architect who wishes to produce column or cathedral-like effects along roadways, around tall buildings, cemeteries, etc.

A "fall-migrant" female alights on such a poplar, seeks an area of rough bark on the older part of the trunk, hides herself in a crevice and almost immediately gives birth to six to eight wingless offspring,

Twin galls on Lombardy petiole.

half of which are males and half females. The offspring of several migrants on one area of the trunk pair, mate, and then each mated female produces one large egg which is pushed deep into the tissues at the bottom of a wrinkle or crevice. These protected eggs overwinter and hatch the following May into wingless "stem mother" aphids which seek out developing leaves and begin feeding on the underside of the petioles or leaf stems just below where the leaf begins. The feeding causes a little hollow to form and the rapidly growing tissue surrounding each feeding aphid then grows even faster until it completely surrounds the sucking insect. When the edges of this living blanket meet they form a thin membrane so that the stem mother is totally enclosed in a flask-shaped enlargement of the petiole.

Other aphids of this same family feed similarly and cause similar but yet distinctly differently shaped galls on several kinds of poplar. Ten kinds of aphid galls occur locally on the petiole, mid-ribs and leaves of poplars. Only one other kind of aphid leaf-gall was found on Lombardy poplar. The other related aphids for the most part also lead double lives. One is a pest of sugar beets, another of cabbages, and for some we do not know the host of the underground stages. The most important of these forms in Quebec appears to be the lettuce root aphid. It is not, however, confined to Quebec, being a serious pest in California and occurring in Alberta, Nova Scotia, Massachusetts, and Maine, and is also well known in many places in Europe.

Within the protective gall on the Lombardy poplar leaf petiole the stem mother gives birth to large numbers of young aphids (all females), which develop wings and escape through pores that develop in the membrane where the edges of the gall join. From 70 to 250 winged aphids or "spring migrants" have been observed to emerge from each gall from 50-60 days after the stem mother started feeding. The earliest was in mid-June, the last in August. On a suitable warm day they become air-borne and search for plants on the roots of which they can live. If the first plant they settle on does not suit them, they try again. We have been able to feed them successfully both in the field and in the greenhouse on roots of 10 common plants, most of which occur as weeds or crop plants in

the field. By far the most preferred plant was lettuce, but the common dandelion, lamb's quarters, redroot pigweed and shepherd's purse all supported good colonies. Not only was lettuce the favourite host but New York No. 12 was preferred and Imperial 456 the least acceptable.

It would seem to be a hazardous existence having to move one's domicile not just once a year in May (as many Montrealers have done for years) but again in the fall. Many of the aphids on lettuce roots, however, avoid this traumatic experience by wintering in the soil. If good fortune supplies new lettuce or other host plants in the same area, or at least within crawling distance the next spring, all is well. Man's ploughs and cultivators often help by scattering some of the lucky ones into areas where hosts can be found. A lettuce plant may be attacked either by forms that have overwintered in the soil or by the offspring of newly arrived winged "spring migrants" from the poplar leaf galls or by both.

The lettuce root aphid is not without natural enemies. It is exposed to birds, and to large insects such as ladybird bettles and lacewings in the gall just before the gall closes and after the pores open. Again it may get caught on the lettuce leaves before it takes off on the fall flight or even caught in the soil by marauding beetles and mites. Aphids have their diseases, too. Some die of fungus diseases, and some are invaded by tiny parasitic animals called protozoa, or by parasitic worms, but as far as we were able to determine none of these enemies ever really cripple the aphid populations.

We were able to kill populations on lettuce roots by placing granular diazinon (1.5 pounds active material per acre) in furrows four and five centimetres either side of the seed row, or by pouring liquid preparations of carbofuran into similar furrows at thinning time. These results must not be construed as a recommendation to use these treatments. Before using any insecticide application make sure you are within the law by checking the label. If the proposed use is not listed it is probably illegal.

Of Cabbages and... Tomatoes

"My wife, a member of the QWI, receives the monthly edition of the Macdonald Journal, receipt of which terminates all work (house or otherwise) for the day.

"Some three years ago we were fortunate in acquiring a copy of "How to Plant a Companion Garden." These copies were made available following a lecture by Dr. Stuart B. Hill. Since that time we have made many copies available to interested friends.

"We were pleased to see the article "Companion Plants" by Professor Hill in the March issue and to note so much additional detail.

"Under the heading "Where to Locate Vegetables" we note what would appear to be a misprint. The tomato is shown as liking and also disliking the cabbage family.

"Wishing you continued success, I am,"

Thos. O. Jones,
Arundel, Que.

(We would like to thank Mr. Jones for his letter and for pointing out the "tomato" misprint. Actually, the tomato likes all members of the cabbage family except kohlrabi. Therefore, under the cabbage family dislikes, scratch out tomato and under tomato dislikes replace the cabbage family with kohlrabi.)

A Courageous Stand

"I'm one of the persons who read and enjoyed immensely your article on wolves. I'm also a member of Canadian Wolf Defenders and the Manitoba Naturalists Society.

"I can't speak officially for either group, but I'm positive they're both as happy and grateful as I am that your magazine used the space and had the courage you did to take that stand on coyotes and wolves."

Patrick Lang,
Sanford, Manitoba.

What is Your Ponderal Index?

by Professor F. A. Farmer
School of Food Science

Is overweight a self-inflicted health problem? The problem of overweight plagues very large proportions of adults in Canada. The main cause seems to be a sedentary life rather than an excessive caloric intake. The results of the Canadian survey carried out in 1970-72 and published in November 1973* show that 80 per cent of women over the age of 65 years are overweight (that is, they are in the high risk category for ponderal index). Ponderal Index is calculated from your height in inches divided by the cube root of your weight in pounds. If this ratio is below 12.5 in women, it is an indication that they are overweight.

Results from Nutrition Canada show that iron deficiency also affects a large proportion of Canadians. Traditionally infants and women have been anemic. Nutrition Canada findings suggest that it is also a problem with men. The shortage of iron in the diet may be due to an increased consumption of refined foods and a reduced total intake of food. Are we really making progress socially when we make work easier and then by eating less to meet our reduced energy needs we become anemic?

Deficiency in protein intake showed up in pregnant women in the diet survey and five per cent of pregnant women had serum protein levels which placed them in the high risk category. Such protein deficiency leads to a low birth weight in infants and ultimately to a disadvantaged child. Most Canadians eat much more protein than they need but pregnant women caught in the poverty cycle find it difficult to buy enough protein.

Shortage of vitamin D and calcium was found in children up to the age of 10 years, although there were no observed cases of rickets. The low values for these two nutrients result from a low intake of milk. As the price of milk increases, economically deprived families will find it increasingly more difficult to drink the amount of milk required for optimum growth.

The results of Nutrition Canada suggest moderate thiamin deficiency among all adults but vitamin C deficiency only among Indians and Eskimos. Foods high in vitamin C are probably not available in remote areas of the North.

A surprising finding of the survey is that large numbers of Canadians of all ages have low serum folate values. However there is no clinical evidence of folate or B_{12} deficiency anemia. It is therefore not possible to assess the clinical significance and public health consequences of this abnormally low level of serum folate.

The strangest finding of all is the prevalence of moderate enlargement of the thyroid gland, inspite of compulsory addition of iodide to table salt in Canada. This was unexpected because the level of iodine in the urine seemed adequate. It is evident that further research is required to define the cause and clinical significance of the problem.

Nutrition Canada has documented specific nutrition problems. Now research must be directed to early detection and prevention programs for the future.

*Nutrition Canada: national survey. Health and Welfare, Canada 1973. 136 pages. Available from Information Canada, 640 St. Catherine St. W., Montreal, P.Q. — Price: $2.75.

The Family Farm

Published in the interests of the farmers of the province by the Quebec Department of Agriculture.

Maple Taffy or Maple Taffy Blend?

At a press conference in March, the Quebec Department of Agriculture stressed certain features of new maple products regulations — in particular concerning the difference between maple products and maple blend products.

Thus, maple taffy must be pure and contain at least 85 per cent of sugar. This product can crystallize quite quickly and it is recommended that it should not be shaken during transportation and that it should be kept in the refrigerator. Maple taffy blend is made from a mixture consisting of at least 75 per cent of maple syrup and not more than 25 per cent of commercial glucose.

The regulations require that "maple taffy blend" containers bear, besides other compulsory information, the following markings: "Maple Taffy Blend" and "Made of 75 per cent of maple syrup and not more than 25 per cent of glucose."

With an annual output of nearly 32 million pounds of syrup, Quebec produces over 75 per cent of the world's maple products and 95 per cent of Canada's.

The Consumer and the Quality of Maple Products

The Quebec Department of Agriculture draws the attention of consumers to certain regulations governing the grading and sale of maple products. At a press conference on March 18 at Le Bûcheron maple grove, St-Joseph-de-Lac, it was pointed out that maple products, wherever they are sold, must meet certain standards as to their composition. These are laid down in the Department's regulations to protect the consumer.

The term "maple products" means maple syrup, maple sugar, maple butter, maple cream, or any other food product made **entirely** or **exclusively** of maple sap. The sugar content and degree of crystallization differ according to the product.

Maple syrup must be of good quality, contain at least 65 per cent of total solids (sugars), be well filtered and have a good flavour. The colour requirements for the different grades of syrup are as follows:

"AA" or Canada very light amber
"A" or Canada light amber
"B" or Canada amber
"C" or Canada dark amber
"D" or Canada dark

Darker coloured syrup usually has a more pronounced maple flavour than the lighter.

Producers and packers of maple products are required by law to print on the label the name of the product, the name or business name and address of the producer or packer, net weight of contents and, in the case of syrup, the grade.

This information, which is for the consumer's benefit, should be checked before buying. Complaints may be made to the Fraud Prevention and Suppression Service of the Quebec Department of Agriculture. Specialists will then be responsible for taking samples and analysing them.

During the sugaring season, about 30 of the Department's inspectors carry out checks on maple products offered for sale, both in stores and in sugar bushes. Nevertheless, the consumer should be careful and beware of imitations.

(The following speech was made by Mr. Gaétan Lussier, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, at the one-day conference "Opportunities '75" held on March 20, 1975, at Macdonald College.)

I am happy that Macdonald College — my old Alma Mater — asked me to join you today at "Opportunities '75".

I was asked to tell you what the government plans to do to help farmers in these unsettled times. For we really are passing through a difficult time for farming — as other speakers have pointed out. In fact, that was the feeling that came out of the Agricultural Outlook Conference in January. On the whole, 1974 was not encouraging. After three years of welcome increases, the farmer's income fell again in 1974 because of even bigger increases in his production costs. In 1975, we expect that gross returns will continue to rise, but that the farmer's net returns will fall again because of his faster rising operating costs. While there is no need for undue

pessimism, we are bound to admit that there is real unrest in agriculture just as there is in the economic situation as a whole.

Increasing Production Costs

Inflating production costs — the big culprit of lower net income in 1974 and of this year's likely decrease — are one of the ills threatening farming. But rising costs are not the only problem, as we are bound to admit. Other ills we must remedy are faulty management, use of agricultural resources which is less than the best, an imperfect marketing system, and low productivity. The government has definite responsibilities and intends to shoulder them — as it has shown. But the farmer must also try harder to improve management, and raise his productivity; progress is possible in all these ways. I am not going to tell you just where farmers can improve; (that wasn't what I was asked to do). What I do mean is that, as in any branch of production, better management and increased farm productivity are as vital to bigger profits or returns as government policies, program, or laws aimed at raising and stabilizing farmers' incomes.

Government Measures

In the few minutes given to me, I want to talk to you briefly about the measures the government plans to take to help farmers. I will dwell a little longer on what the government intends to do to curb the repeated ups and downs of farm income.

Peculiarities of Farm Production

I have just mentioned some changes farmers need to make (as regards management and productivitiy). But we all know very well that insufficient and unstable farm incomes are also partly due to the very nature of farming. As you know, farming isn't like any other business. Because of the decisive effect of climate and other natural causes, and because of means of production which are hard to alter and fairly fixed demand (and so on), changes in yields of farm products are bigger than changes in industrial output. In other words, to a great extent the size and quality of farm crops is decided by things farmers can't control — such as the weather. The resulting swings in farm output lead to lopsided prices and lopsided incomes.

As regards prices: the output of many farm products may vary greatly from year to year and even during a single year. Big crops bring price collapses. Farm prices are much more affected by production volume than are the prices of manufactured goods. As you know, the way farm prices vary is out of proportion to changes in yields. This is because demand for farm produce is not very flexible.

As regards income: This irregular supply coupled with fairly fixed demand explains why farm incomes vary, and often vary so widely. Studies of farm incomes show that they really do rise and fall more than non-farm incomes, and more than the national income. If we take a fairly long period, we find that the national income rises slowly and steadily, but that is not how it is with farm incomes. During the past 10 years, farm income in Quebec has risen in seven and fallen in three.

A farmer can protect himself to some extent against the whims of nature through crop insurance. But, even so, there still remain some income-influencing factors we can't get rid of. Even though a well-organized marketing system and joint marketing plans and producers' boards may do a lot to reduce changes in farm prices and incomes, they will never do away with them.

This explains the trend towards more or less tightly organized marketing of certain farm products (for example, milk, eggs and poultry) on a provincial and national scale. These efforts are having much success in damping erratic swings in production and prices. But, in spite of all these efforts towards organization, farm incomes are still beset by instability.

We must try again. The problem is a complicated and unusually hard one. We have to take into account the nature of farm production. But we also have to retain the normal

price differences which are due to what is called "comparative advantage" (that is to say, resulting from natural local excellence of one kind or another) — otherwise, we shall have to say goodbye to dynamic farming and encourage inertia. We can't divide up the market into watertight compartments or make the Canadian or the Quebec market into a captive one for every farm product — at least not without hurting farmers, processors, and consumers. Let's not forget that processors and consumers still have plenty of leeway and, if need be, can buy elsewhere.

Act to Stabilize Farm Incomes

To make its farm policy as a whole more unified, the government is going to put together, within a framework of general scope, a set of guidelines for the stabilization of farm incomes. Special programs based on these guidelines will then be worked out for each farm production. The programs or policies will take the form of specific regulations. The preliminary draft of a bill for this purpose was tabled before the last session of the provincial legislature adjourned.

This bill to stabilize farmers' incomes in Quebec will tie in with and supplement measures by the federal government under a revised Agricultural Stabilization Act. Essentially, the bill aims to level out the excessive and repeated ups and downs which have traditionally plagued the farmer in the past. It is designed to work so that the farmer can be assured of a "basic margin" (of profit) or a stabilized income. Directly, the mechanisms it provides for will automatically counteract any excessive rising or falling of his income. Indirectly, they will counteract variations in farm production and prices. In years when farm income is up, farmers will be required to contribute to a compensation fund. In years when farm income is down, they will receive payments from the fund to compensate them. The effect of the compensation fund will thus be to tone down changes in income — or, as an economist might say, to smooth out exaggerated crests and troughs in the farm income curve.

What effect will more stable farm incomes have on farm production?

To start with, more stable farm incomes will enable Quebec to increase its production of certain farm products and carry out long-term production programs. The reason for this is that the income stabilization plan will give farmers more confidence. Besides creating a climate of stability, it will mean that the processing industries can count on a steadier supply of Quebec farm products.

As you probably know, the Quebec Department of Agriculture has set targets — especially for milk production, beef production and grain production. But there isn't much chance that these targets will be reached if the farmers are so unsure of their income that they can't make plans to expand — or if they have to go through a crisis like the one we've had in beef. These things discourage farmers and make them lose interest in growing certain crops or raising certain animals.

Farmers' incomes are unsteady and inadequate. The government's aim is to make them more stable and more in line with the incomes of other skilled workers. The planned farm income assurance bill is the tool it plans to use to do so. Furthermore, as announced in the Speech from the Throne on Tuesday, the government intends to play a more definite and dynamic role in the processing and distribution of farm products.

I've been talking about raising and stabilizing farm incomes. Several times, I've mentioned the need for higher productivity. Productivity is that queer thing that lets you get extra yield for the same investment (or just a little bigger), without extra labour. It's a revolution in working methods — a switch to new varieties — or making use of new advances in farming technique. The government does not propose to guarantee incomes unless efforts are made on the productivity side. Its measures are designed to encourage farmers to use their time and resources in a more productive way.

Integration of Farm Programs

That is why, at the Department of Agriculture, we want to integrate present farm production programs in such a way as to raise farm productivity.

Thus, for example, the Quebec Farm Credit Bureau might give priority to loans to farmers who present a crop production program, or who belong (or decide to belong) to the Quebec Dairy Herd Analysis Program, or use a recognized system of accounting (such as CANFARM). Of all farmers in Canada, those of Quebec are perhaps the ones who do the most bookkeeping. We have had farm management services in Quebec since 1968.

The government's overall farm production program includes a "follow-up" by the agricultural department's regional agricultural offices and laboratories service to see whether crop yields and livestock productivity have improved.

As regards higher productivity, there is plenty of scope. For instance, the average annual production of 7,500 pounds of milk per cow is definitely too low. Hay and grain yields are also too low. After Opal wheat was introduced, yields rose on the average by 25 per cent. Increased productivity is one way to expand and it is one of the tools in our policy workshop. To sum up, we want to be sure that our farm programs — credit for production, drainage assistance, and so on — are better integrated and suited to the farmers' own programs to increase the productivity of their land and livestock.
As shown by studies of dairy farms, higher productivity results from better breeding or "genetic improvement" — that's for sure — but even more from bigger and better yields of fodder grown on the farm. These improved yields are much more decisive than larger rations of "moulee".

From This Month with Agriculture Canada

Kale: Forage kale, a hardy curly-leafed cabbage, may be an alternative to feed grains, especially for ruminants. Agriculture Canada scientists at Lennoxville, Que., say kale could be a profitable forage crop in most parts of eastern Canada, particularly those areas where the growing season is short and cool. Kale has extreme cold hardiness, is highly digestible for cattle and yields a high amount of digestible protein per unit area.

Snowmobiles and soil: An Agriculture Canada researcher at Lennoxville, Que., is determining what damage may be caused to the environment by snowmobiles. So far, he has learned that soil under a snowmobile track is frozen as deeply as soil that has no protective snow covering. In future experiments, he hopes to determine the effects of snowmobiles on crops.

New potato seed released: A new tablestock potato variety, Belleisle, will be introduced to commercial growers this spring.

Belleisle, developed by D. A. Young and H. T. Davies at Agriculture Canada's research station here, is a high-yielding variety with excellent boiling and baking qualities. It is highly resistant to bruising and mechanical injury. This new variety was market-tested in Montreal and Toronto last year, and was well accepted by consumers.

Growth regulators: Scientists are teaching apple trees new tricks. The trees are learning to ripen their fruit on cue, to not drop too many apples on the ground and to grow the right proportion of leaves and blossoms for the next year.

It's all the work of chemical growth regulators, explain Agriculture Canada researchers at the department's Smithfield, Ont., experimental farm.

The growth regulators are a boon to apple growers who now can plan harvesting dates with greater certainty, thus reducing labour problems and increasing profits.

Elevated apple picking: Instead of clinging to a ladder with one hand and reaching out to pick the fruit with the other, apple pickers at Agriculture Canada's Smithfield, Ont., experimental farm had a chance to pick with both hands last

fall. They stood with both feet planted firmly on a mechanical platform built on a wagon that was towed through the orchard by a tractor. This harvesting aid will increase labour efficiency when hedge-row planting of trees catches on, says Bill Reid, an Agriculture Canada mechanical engineer.

Non-bloating alfalfa sought: It was determined by Agriculture Canada scientists in the late 1950s that cattle bloat is caused by soluble proteins found in large quantities in alfalfa. Bloat, which causes death if not treated in time, involves a massive buildup of gas in the stomach of ruminant animals such as cattle.

Two Agriculture Canada scientists at Saskatoon, Sask., are searching for a particular quality that, in some plants, is capable of binding the soluble protein to prevent conditions in the animal that cause bloat.

If this characteristic can be found and bred into alfalfa, new non-bloating varieties should be possible.

Success would encourage wider use of this highly nutritious crop, say the researchers.

More wheat for same cost: Offering more wheat for the same cost is the aim of a research project at Agriculture Canada's Swift Current, Sask., research station.

Scientists are concentrating on producing wheats of different qualities but with substantially higher yield than the traditional hard red spring wheats for which Canada has become famous.

"The new wheat varieties may be of lower quality for bread-making, but they're just as useful and nutritious to the people buying them," says Dr. Ted Hurd, a plant breeder at the station.

"We think that before too long these lower-quality, higher-yielding wheats will be very much in demand. We have a hungry world."

Payment to Quebec wheat producers: Payments totalling $327,586 for 171,511 bushels of winter wheat sold by Quebec producers in 1973 for domestic human use were made to 458 Quebec farmers. The payments were made under the two-price wheat agreement.

Beef industry assistance: The main feature of a new program to support the Canadian beef industry is stabilization of the slaughter cow market. It also includes the purchase of canned beef for world food aid, promotion of ground beef-type meat at the retail level and an assurance to cattle producers that the stabilization program for Grades A, B and C steers and heifers begun last August will continue after August, 1975, with the support price indexed to production costs at that time.

This Month with the QWI

Annual Convention

The Annual Convention of the Quebec Women's Institutes will be held at Macdonald College from May 26 - 29. The Executive Meeting will be held on the 26th, the Board Meeting on the 27th, and the General Convention on the 28th and 29th.

The theme of this year's Convention will be "Women in World Affairs — IWY" (International Women's Year). Guest speaker on Wednesday, May 28, will be FWIC President Mrs. John McLean. Mrs. McLean will be attending the entire Convention and hopes to meet and chat with as many members as possible.

A Busy Year

Matagami (Abitibi North) has not had a Publicity Convener for some time, but Mrs. Comba, their President, sent this report of their year's activities.

Matagami celebrated their 10th Anniversary in June and five Charter Members present were presented with a rose.

The branch sponsored a bicycle safety course, which was given by the local police, for about 25 children. An interesting and successful safety competition was sponsored in the elementary school and in February a baking contest was held for the school children. At one meeting a math teacher spoke on the new math. Two Fisher Price toys were donated to the local hospital.

At the annual meeting in March funds were raised by having an auction sale. An annual fund raising activity is the stall at the Lions Club Fair were they sell handicrafts and hot dogs, hamburgers, etc.

The branch is active in trying to get better television reception in the community and a better water supply — "Our water is terrible." They are also trying to get shopping facility improvements in the way of service, cleanliness, and supplies. All in all, they have had a busy year.

Small but Active

Val d'Or (Abitibi East) has just 11 members, but they are very active in the community nonetheless. They canvass for the Cancer Fund, Red Cross, Polio Fund, Crippled Children and sell poppies for Armistice Day. The older members of the community are also remembered.

Meetings are made as interesting as possible and they learn from one another. Whoever has a special skill shares this with the other members. They have demonstrations on macramé, sewing, cooking, and crochet.

Each month a member takes a turn to comment on articles she has read in the Macdonald Journal. Articles from the Federated News are also enjoyed.

The meetings are conducted in English and French and "some have learned very much from this experience."

Prominent people in the region are invited as speakers and members have enjoyed a variety of topics. "In 1975 we pledge to make our organization better known and to recruit new members."

Pen Pals

Quite a few of our members have pen pals now. Some are in other parts of Canada and others overseas. Letters from these friends are so very interesting that I thought I would like to share my pen pal with you. She is a member of the Country Women's Association of Australia. Her name is Margaret Brien. Her husband is Lach and they have two children, Linda, who is now eight, and Craig, 5½. Her husband and his brother are partners in a sawmill.

The Briens live in Eugowra, a small town with a population of 2,000 in New South Wales. They are 52 miles from Orange, the nearest large town.

Mrs. Brien has told me that their town is very small. There is a bakery, news agents, Post Office and exchange, two hotels, two cafes, two general stores, butcher, electrician, and hardware. Groceries, meat and fruit are very dear so she travels east to Orange to shop every three weeks. They hope to get a deep freeze unit soon to help through summer. They have frost in winter from May to September and in mid-October it turns hot and stays that way until mid-April.

The Briens built their own house and hope to build a carport, new laundry, and box-room soon. Mrs.

Members of the South Bolton branch in Brome Country are pleased with the Birds of America quilt which they have recently completed.

Brien loves knitting, sewing, and most handicrafts. She tells me she tries to keep the garden nice but it is hard in summer.

In the spring of 1974, Mrs. Brien wrote that the floods had been dreadful in Queensland and she had spent most of one morning packing used clothing that had been dropped at her place. In the far west of the state near Bourke, they had five inches of rain in a few hours, which is half their yearly supply.

In her fall letter Mrs. Brien reported that they had a great deal of rain and the Mandagery had overflowed and was raging through the houses. They took all the furnishings, including the pews which were very heavy, from the church and put them in the church hall, as it takes a really big flood to get into it. Fortunately the flood was not as big as first thought and the church was not damaged.

Mrs. Brien was nominated for the position of Group Land Cookery Liaison Officer and won. She says it is a most interesting job. In that letter they were preparing for the Land Cookery Semi-finals, Group Handicraft Day and Floral Art to be held in March. It was to be the first time they have had all three on the one day and though it would throw quite a lot into a flat spin in organizing it, it would be very worthwhile. The event was to be held in Orange as it is central to all groups. Mrs. Brien was planning to do some sewing for it and said that if one is lucky enough to win a prize one can be glad as they compete against 25 other branches.

Mrs. Brien dropped me a line last December while waiting for her C.W.A. Land Cookery fruit cake entry to cook. She said the farmers were doing odd jobs after getting in as much of the crop as they could with all the rain they had had. Shearing was in full swing and she hoped to get some black fleeces for a woven rug for their rumpus room. Evidently black fleeces were in great demand with spinners.

She said the children were very excited about Christmas and end of year activities. They were going to Lach's mum's for lunch and then home for tea with friends. Santa was bringing Linda a pair of skates and Craig a billy cart. Santa was working on the billy cart every lunch hour. She added a P.S. to the letter saying that her cake looked good.

I have enjoyed my correspondence with Mrs. Brien and feel that, through her letters, I have learned more about Australia and the way of life there. I feel, too, that I have gained a new friend. Once we have looked into the possibilities, we may be able to publish the occasional letter from other pen pals in the future.

Mrs. James Robertson,
QWI Publicity Convener.

The Hoodless Rose

The Hoodless Rose is available from: Sheridan Nurseries, 7000 Evan Street, Etobicoke, Ontario, and Brookdale Kingsway Nurseries, Bowmanville, Ontario.

Pork Pie

1 pound minced pork
1 small onion, minced
½ teaspoon salt,
¼ teaspoon celery salt
¼ teaspoon cloves
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
½ cup water
¾ cup rolled oats

Combine first 7 ingredients and cook in saucepan for 20 minutes, uncovered. Add rolled oats. Let cool. Season to taste. Makes about 20 tarts or 2 small pies.

Dear W. I. Members,

Winter is slowly going away and we are planning our gardens. Some are ordering seeds for their School Fairs. I am always an enthusiastic gardener at this time of the year when I study the catalogues. My final results are seldom like the illustrations, but hope springs eternal when the new catalogue comes in.

Sugaring has started in our area but it is slow because of the cool weather. Labour is a problem, as usual, and many producers are going over to pipelines and some use oil for evaporating, though this is now expensive.

Annual meetings, payment of dues, election of officers etc. were reported by all. Many of you have new members, some only one, others two of three. Some of you have lost members and though you have a few new ones, the membership remains the same. This is common with most of us.

Many members had perfect attendance at meetings including a 93-year-old member of **Granby Hill.**

Richmond Hill rewarded three of their members who had perfect attendance, by donating $2. to their favourite charity. **Richmond Hill Young Women** had 9 of their 16 members with perfect attendance.

Christmas is long past, but in case you still have cards you don't feel like throwing away they can be sent to a mission in India. Rev. Eugenio Petrin, St. Paul's Catholic Mission, P.O. Binnaguri 735201 Dist. Jalparguin, West Bengal, India. This is an address sent in by **East Angus.** The Montreal Childrens' Hospital and the Douglas Hospital also use these cards.

The Agriculture Convener at **East Angus** spoke on the high cost of feeding and transporting calves to market. They held a successful winter carnival. Comics were handed in at a February meeting and these will be sent to children in the North.

Scotstown heard an article on the accidental poisoning of children eating too many vitamin tablets. They also heard about local cookbooks with recipes by community ladies of long ago.

You nearly all visit the elderly in the community and in rest homes. Others provide cards, gifts, or treats for special occasions such as Valentine Day and Easter.

Brookbury made a donation towards a piano fund in a rest home. They also gave a gift to a fire victim, saw slides of P.E.I., and held a successful card party.

Two of the members from **Canterbury** visited three homes for the elderly and gave gifts to each person in the home. They also donated to the piano fund.

A Roll Call that brought a bit of colour to **East Clifton's** meeting was "Show a favourite book or magazine." Amongst those shown were a picturesque magazine of the New England States, an illustrated book on barns, and one on Canadian Wildlife. One member read an excerpt from a book by Dean Hughes, containing a story with a local setting.

A casserole supper meeting was enjoyed by **Bury** members, their families, and friends. One member had made candles as part of the decorations. A rose candle created great interest. These were made by pouring the hot wax into a greased cookie tray and the petals were cut and shaped while the wax was still warm — too thin a layer of wax causes the petals to be thin and brittle and easily broken. They had a beautiful display of a variety of handicrafts at the meeting. Their winter carnival was very successful and prizes donated by the local citizens went for "best costume", "eldest and youngest on the ice", "races", etc.

A few 25 and 50 year pins have been given and Life Membership pins were awarded at the annual meetings.

Argenteuil members are already making plans for the Lachute Fair and hope to have good exhibits. Several of the branches gave a donation to the elementary school year book and to the school lunch fund. Pennies for Friendship,

Sunshine, Cheer and Dominion Cash register slips were collected. Most of the Branches are planning to fill handi bags.

Grenville held a bingo in February and **Upper Lachute East End** worked on a quilt as their March project. **Pioneer's** annual meeting was a luncheon with members contributing a favourite dish.

In **Chateauguay-Huntingdon County** five branches supported the public speaking contest in their local elementary schools. The winners in the four higher levels compete at the county level. The county finals are held in a different town each year.

A discussion on the wolf problem in this county was held in **Franklin Centre,** and they would like to see the bounty on wolves to hunters renewed in order to reduce the number of wolves in the area. In some parts they are reported to be very numerous and parents are concerned for the safety of their children if they wander.

A recent speaker at **Dewittville** was the local agronome who gave many helpful hints and answered questions, and gave information on where booklets and pamphlets might be obtained. This branch has 10 new members and would like to know if anyone can beat that.

A Red Cross Home Nursing course is being sponsored in **Hemmingford** with one member sharing in the teaching of the course. Their Roll Call "Show and Tell" produced a variety of articles and handicrafts and one member brought a selection of rolls she had made.

International Women's Year 1975 was the subject of a talk by Mrs. Wells Coates at an **Ascot** meeting. This was also the subject chosen by the Publicity Convenor at **Howick.** She named a number of women who have been appointed to prominent executive office and who have the ability to do the job.

This year, the town of Huntingdon will be 150 years old. Plans are being made for the anniversary celebrations, the main object of which is to build a senior citizens' home. The local W. I. members are doing their part and at Christmas, instead of exchanging gifts, they gave the equivalent in money towards the fund for the home.

The annual meeting of **Spooner Pond** was held in an elderly people's home. They brought in articles for handi bags and have finished a quilt. Their out-going President was presented with a 25-year pin.

Shipton members saw a film on cancer. They made and donated articles to the Cancer Society. Branch Publicity Conveners were entertained by the **Gore** W.I. and members acted as hostesses at the monthly birthday party at an old people's home.

Education and all its problems concern all of us. Bill 22 is still in the forefront of our minds and some of us have sent letters to our local MNA in connection with the Bill.

Milby members heard an article on a problem that is concerning college and business establishments re. the seeming lack of knowledge by students of basic spelling, grammar, written expression, and arithmetic in interview tests. Will we have to go back to the three Rs? Are we getting too much and sacrificing quality?

Mr. Gallagher, a guidance counsellor from the Regional High School, outlined the courses and the available workshop areas at a recent meeting at Lennoxville. This meeting was attended by parents as well as W.I. guests. The branch gave donations to both the regional and elementary schools.

Inverness is donating a prize to a student in the Memorial High School They sent a sunshine basket to a member who had had an accident. They are a small group but assist in the community in many ways, i.e., donate to the community hall, help with the Christmas party and UNICEF collections. An interesting article on "sugar saving" was read at a recent meeting.

Valcartier gave a donation to their local school to purchase playground equipment. They held a euchre party at the end of the year and had a sale table of farm products, handicrafts, jams, etc., both of which were very successful. Some miscellaneous articles read at meetings concerned the teaching of sex education in a regional school; uses of baking soda, and poor nutrition. A cookie contest was held in one branch and another named and told about the use of various antiques.

Motto: Be careful of the words you say. Keep them soft and sweet. You never know from day to day which ones you will have to eat.

Mrs. James Robertson,
Publicity Convener.

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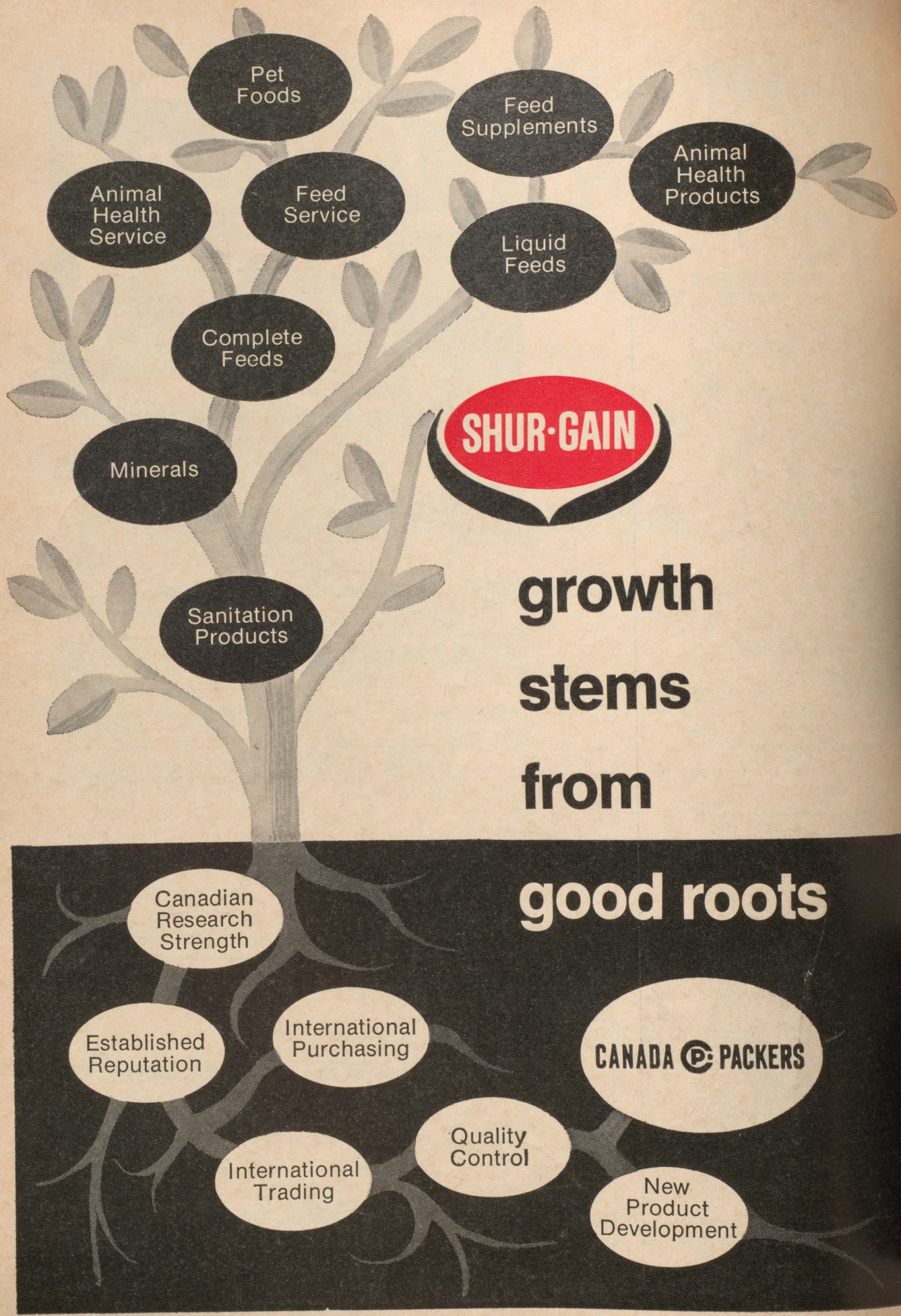
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